

Var. *stenopetala* is very striking, its leaves floating, deep purple beneath and veined (PLATE 1062, FIG. 1) as in typical *N. odorata*, but the flowers stand well above them, on stiff erect peduncles (PLATES 1061 and 1062, FIG. 2). The narrow (lance-acuminate) sepals, with drab- or fuscous-green backs, are strongly reflexed in anthesis, pointing down toward the water, and the lance-acuminate narrow petals are quite unlike those of typical *N. odorata* and of var. *gigantea*. In mid-September, after weeks of relatively dry weather, var. *stenopetala* was nearly all shrivelled and not to be seen. Only a few small pools exhibited it and in these Mr. Long and I could find no fruits. The plant is presumably widely distributed in the Great Dismal Swamp, See p. 94.

**ITEA VIRGINICA* L., forma *ABBREVIATA* Fern. in *RHODORA*, xlix. 22 (1947). *SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY*: peaty and sandy shore of Whitefield's Millpond, southwest of Corinth, *Fernald & Moore*, no. 15,094.

In September, when Mr. Long and I visited the spot we found that the shrub, along with all its associates near the dam, had been cut off. We shall have to wait for fruiting material until another year.

(To be continued.)

HERMAN C. BENKE.—Mr. Herman C. Benke, well-known amateur botanist, died in his home December 9 of a heart attack at the age of 77.

Mr. Benke was a keen observer of plants, and devoted most of his spare time to the study of the local flora, especially of Wisconsin, Illinois, and northern Indiana. In his earlier years he was a teacher of geography and science in various schools in Wisconsin. After his retirement, he supported himself by the use of his camera and became a professional photographer. In his spare time he collected assiduously, especially around Crystal Lake and Elgin, Illinois, and Manitowoc, Wisconsin, in which region he was thoroughly at home.

Although he was interested in all the plants of the local flora, he became particularly absorbed in a study of the family *Compositae*, especially the genus *Aster*. He took an especial interest in the color variations of the plants, and discovered many new color forms previously unknown to science. A few of these were

described by him or bear his name, testifying to his discovery of them.

He was a contributor of newspaper articles on the local flora, autumn coloration, preventives and treatment of poison ivy and poison sumach effects, besides a varied mass of botanical information gleaned from his personal experience.

His enthusiasm to travel and explore for plants was so great that he sold his Kansas farm, which he had inherited many years ago, in order to defray expenses for a botanical trip to Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. While the greater portion of his specimens were collected in Illinois, Wisconsin, Kansas, Indiana, Michigan, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, Missouri, and Arkansas, he found time to botanize in California and Mexico as well. Altogether he visited 32 states.

A large and complete collection is in the herbarium of the Chicago Natural History Museum, amounting to many thousand specimens, the result of his many years of enthusiastic botanizing.

Mr. Benke not only will be remembered for his many contributions to knowledge of the flora of the United States, especially of the central states, but also for the part he played in conservation of the native flora and fauna. He was responsible for getting the natural stand of Arbor Vitae (*Thuja occidentalis*) preserved and made into a sanctuary at Elgin, known as Trout Park or Elgin Botanical Garden. This is one of the few localities known in Illinois where this species is still growing wild.—JULIAN A. STEYERMARK, Chicago Natural History Museum.

A FLORA OF KALAMAZOO COUNTY.—CLARENCE R. and FLORENCE N. HANES have for several years been assiduously collecting and studying the plants of their county. Not only that; they have supplied material to more than a score of specialists in order to gain their identifications in technical groups. Their results are now assembled in a beautifully made volume¹. The occurrence within the county is stated in some detail and the introductory pages give a clear and very interesting discussion of the soil-conditions and other environmental factors within it and bordering counties². Such a carefully prepared and documented flora is a great

¹ HANES, CLARENCE R. and FLORENCE N., Flora of Kalamazoo County, Michigan. Vascular Plants, pp. xii + 295, 14 full-page plates (too modestly called "figs.") Schoolcraft, Michigan, Clarence R. Hanes. \$4.00.

² The present writer is specially glad to be made conscious of the location of Kalamazoo. Before the International Botanical Congress of 1930 he was studying at the British Museum of Natural History, where hundreds of delegates drifted in before the opening of the congress. He was asked by his British colleagues to act as a sort of